

Baltimore Port-Wide Total Quality Leadership Team

Awarded April, 1997

to the Immigration and Naturalization Service; U.S. Coast Guard; Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture; Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services; U.S. Customs Service; Department of the Interior; Maryland Port Administration; Maritime Institute of Graduate Studies; Maryland Association of Maryland Pilots; Maryland Maritime Association; Baltimore Brokers Association; International Longshoremen's Association; Maryland Truck Association Intermodal Council; Carriers Container Council; and Steamship Trade Association

Contact: Dr. Michael Galiazzo, Maryland Port Authority, 410-771-8111

Fourteen government and private sector maritime agencies in Baltimore formed the Baltimore Port-Wide Total Quality Leadership Team and signed a pledge to meet with customers to resolve issues, incidents and concerns. This effort was designed to demonstrate that Baltimore was reducing barriers and that port agencies were working together in a cooperative spirit. The team also saw a need to reduce costs at the Port of Baltimore. In 1996, two new programs that saved time and money were implemented: the Port-Wide Vessel Notification Form & Simple FAX-Federal Agency eXchange, and the Port-Wide Customer Response Program. Both programs have led to increased cooperation and reduced cost in operations.

The perception that federal agencies impede trade was quickly erased by the implementation of the Baltimore Port-Wide Total Quality Leadership Team. The team has distinguished itself by getting results, saving money, and providing excellent customer service.

Border Crossing Card Reengineering Team

Awarded December, 1995

to the Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Paul Morris, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 202-305-2970

Every year the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) issues over 220,000 Border Crossing Cards to eligible Mexican nationals. The card approval and issuance process was reengineered, retaining full adjudication integrity while significantly improving productivity. At five ports-of-entry, productivity doubled and all application backlogs were eliminated by implementation of the new process in March 1995. After implementation, one location adjudicated nearly 7,000 applications in one month, compared to 3,300 the previous month using the old process. This dramatic improvement was achieved with the same number of employees. Instead of waiting several months to be interviewed, applicants can now be seen on a walk-in-basis at most locations. Where scheduling is necessary, applicants are now interviewed within the following business week. Individual interview and card processing times decreased from 10 to 15 minutes using the old process, to approximately five minutes using the reengineered process.

Buffalo District: Team BISON

Awarded April, 1996
to the Buffalo, NY District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Ross Christopher, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 716-551-4741 x6124

Team BISON - Buffalo Immigration Software Operations Network - was developed and implemented by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Buffalo, NY District Office employees who saw that substantial savings and benefits could be realized by automating a number of processes. A critical element of the team's success was its approach. Rather than using an outside consultant or firm which would have required extensive and costly familiarization with operational environments and requirements, Team BISON developed the existing programming skills of fully trained INS officers. These officers understood the district's needs and BISON provided them with the skills to effectively address these needs. The team developed a number of applications resulting in annual savings of approximately \$4.3 million and receipts of approximately \$200,000. Additionally, each year well over one million aliens benefit from significantly shorter and easier processes. Team BISON also created a shareware product line and operates a help desk which provides on-line technical support to offices throughout the INS.

Citizenship USA (El Monte, CA)

Awarded May, 1996
to the Los Angeles District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Jane Arellano, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 213-894-6034

The Los Angeles District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) completed a comprehensive and integrated review of processes, staffing, and facilities used for naturalization applications, with the goal of significantly reducing both time and burden for both applicants and INS employees. As a result, additional staffing was provided, processes were reengineered, and applicant flow through a facility was improved. Expanded use of community-based organizations (CBOs) and of off-site locations, accompanied by extended business hours, have helped to bring the service to the client and to eliminate needless barriers to naturalization.

As a result, the average daily number of interviews has increased from 650 to 2500 (at peak staffing), the number of CBOs participating in off-site interviews has increased from 15 to 35, applicant waiting time has been substantially reduced, and with the active assistance of the Los Angeles District Court, significantly larger numbers of applicants are being naturalized.

El Centro Service Processing Center

Awarded September, 1994
to the Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Nathan Davis, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 202-305-0615

As Operation Desert Storm wound down, a small group of Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) employees independently formed a task force to convert a tremendous amount of

military supplies for use by other agencies. These supplies, valued at \$1.2 million, were originally destined for U.S. troops had Operation Desert Storm continued. With the active cooperation of both the General Services Administration (GSA) and the Department of Defense, the INS El Centro Service Processing Center (SPC) team arranged to take delivery of the supplies, free of charge.

The supplies consisted of such items as ready-to-eat meals, hygienic materials, writing paper, envelopes, pens, cans of non-perishable foods, and bread. The SPC team used most of the supplies to supplement meals and other items needed by detainees at the SPC. Supplies the facility could not use were dispatched to INS activities in other regions and to other federal agencies. The INS locations receiving the supplies included El Paso, Texas; Phoenix, Arizona; San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego, California; and Honolulu, Hawaii. The Federal Bureau of Prisons also benefitted from the surplus supplies. For economical reasons, shipping by outside sources was deliberately kept to a minimum. Most of the shipping consisted of loading supplies on INS buses and vans already scheduled to transport detainees from one facility to another.

This effort has become an ongoing program. The GSA and other agencies are periodically contacted by the SPC to locate, take possession of, distribute, and use available goods and equipment. The program was initiated at an important time when INS was tasked with addressing a situation involving large numbers of Chinese nationals. The value of transferred supplies, and associated administrative savings, permits resources to be reprogrammed to other vital missions.

El Paso Process Action Team

Awarded September, 1994
to the El Paso District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Kenneth Pasquarell, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 210-967-7109

Faced with increasing pedestrian and vehicular traffic at the El Paso, Texas ports-of-entry, and having to continue to process immigrant visa applications, the El Paso District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) formed a process action team to identify ways to improve the visa application process and make the best use of existing resources. Compounding the situation, in 1989 the Department of State began closing immigrant visa issuing posts in Mexico and consolidating this activity at the Juarez, Mexico post, immediately adjacent to El Paso.

The team charted the current immigrant visa application process, establishing a daily baseline number of 350 applications. Charting also graphically illustrated the total application process involving the Departments of Justice and State. Many applicants regularly spent 6 to 8 hours in United States government offices waiting for visas to be issued. Often, applicants had to return to those offices on a second day to complete the process. Team members visited the INS Regional Service Center, where applications are adjudicated, and the American Consulate in Juarez, where visas are issued after applicants are interviewed. The team identified and eliminated several areas of duplication. It obtained further benefits by educating INS employees and applicants, and keeping applicants informed of what and why procedures are done.

To reduce the number of time-consuming questions asked by applicants, a videotape with basic immigration information was produced and is shown continuously in port waiting areas. This is accompanied by new instructional handouts and periodic public address announcements.

The results are: applications processed daily increased from 350 to 800, taking half the previous time and deferring no inspections to a succeeding day; the error rate on visa applications was reduced by half; INS and State Department Consulate staffs cooperate regularly and effectively; and inquiries and complaints have been drastically reduced. And finally, a continual improvement process has been instituted.

Employee Action Response System

Awarded September, 1994
to the Los Angeles District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Charles Molden, 213-894-4634

Within the Los Angeles District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), an Innovation Committee was established as a basis for transformation and reinvention. This committee is broadly representative of the district's functions and responsibilities. In turn, the committee developed the Employee Action Response System, more commonly known as EARS. EARS enables all district employees with ideas for improving procedures and conditions to be heard. The committee was empowered by management to investigate and act upon employee suggestions. The system has been exceedingly well used and has proven highly beneficial. An employee receives immediate acknowledgment of his or her suggestion through a committee member assigned to the suggestion as an action officer. After discussion of the suggestion and possible plans or actions, the action officer reports back to the committee, which then decides whether or not to adopt the idea. If the idea is adopted, the assigned action officer works with the submitting employee to implement it. Though infrequent, when an idea is not adopted, it is forwarded to the proper party for further consideration, and the employee is told why the idea was not adopted and whom to further contact.

The employee suggestions have resulted in successes ranging from improving local communications to national scope enhancements. The need for new, cost-effective equipment, and repair or enhancement of existing equipment has been identified and acted upon. Greater use of alternative work schedules has occurred. In some cases, suggestions have warranted and resulted in the creation of Process Action Teams (PAT). A PAT is formed to address larger issues that require more thorough analyses and bases for implementation. In all cases, the key is responsiveness from the initial contact, through follow-up activities, to results. INS Los Angeles District Office employees have been shown that they can make a difference.

Gateway Seattle-Tacoma

Awarded January, 1997
to the Immigration and Naturalization Service; U.S. Customs Service; Department of Agriculture; U.S. Public Health Service; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior; and Port of Seattle

Contact: Richard C. Smith, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 206-553-4147

When the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the U.S. Customs Service (Customs), Port of Seattle, and airline officials became aware of complaints from international travelers that the federal inspection process at the Seattle-Tacoma (Sea-Tac) Airport was too lengthy and impersonal, the Gateway Seattle-Tacoma program was launched. It is a comprehensive customer service program that puts the air traveler first.

To initiate the program, a six-month study was done that revealed there was too much of a law enforcement feel in the federal inspection process; the inspection area was too stark and uninviting for tired, stressed travelers; travelers needed instruction before arrival on how to prepare entry documents; and airport personnel did not know how to relate to people from diverse cultures. With this in mind, the agencies involved, with INS as the leader, began studying and planning methods for addressing the concerns. As a result, several customer service initiatives were put in place. Customer service training was implemented for all travel area employees and training was provided to the airlines on visas, passports, and classifications of admission through informational booklets. Literature was published by Northwest Airlines in eight languages to instruct passengers on completing immigration forms in flight, and a video was produced to assist passengers in the federal inspections process. Cultural diversity training for airport employees was initiated and the training facility received a make over.

All federal agencies involved helped to make this program a success. The Department of Agriculture sped up inspections by nonaggressively using beagles to inspect hand luggage for foodstuffs. They have also lessened their inspection time by opening a third processing station and adding more inspectors. Customs introduced an outreach effort in a mobile station that can be moved from gate to gate. It is used to inform departing international passengers what they can bring back into the United States on their return. INS introduced an accelerated Advanced Passenger Information System which focuses on tour groups. This system forwards group passenger information to Sea-Tac in advance of landing, allowing INS to pre-screen arrivals, thereby cutting the entry processing in half.

As a result, a national customer service-oriented survey of passengers gave Sea-Tac an excellent rating and recognition as one of the most improved airports between 1994-95 and among the top ten best airports for federal inspection clearance, compared with major foreign and domestic airports.

General Store

Awarded March, 1996
to the Houston District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service; and City of Houston

Contact: Kim Moss, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 713-643-8000

An interagency Hammer Award winner, the U.S. General Store in Houston, Texas provides a unique way of doing business with government agencies. The concept and specific project were aggressively championed and pursued by the area's Federal Executive Board. The General Store's principal purpose is to be a one-stop business center for small to medium-size businesses interested in obtaining from government regulatory agencies information that could impact their operations. Thirteen federal agencies cooperated among themselves and

with the City of Houston to provide public services at a single location. The City of Houston provides space in one of its buildings which has good transportation access and parking capacity. To further facilitate citizen access and use, the city has public service offices in the same facility.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Houston District Office has been actively involved in the project from its outset. During the past year, the district has used the General Store to conduct training for area employers and others interested in immigration-related issues. The site is also being used for INS fingerprint training. Plans are currently underway to expand services in the area of employment verification. INS is also a key participant in the General Store's marketing and special projects committees.

Thousands of customers have been provided information and training on a broad spectrum of matters, including employment eligibility, environment, tax, social security, equal employment, small business, immigration, and a host of others. Government and public support of the General Store remains highly positive.

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Out-Stationing Project; District Offices; Chicago North, Chicago Loop, Chicago Near Southwest

Awarded March, 1997

to the Chicago District Offices of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Social Security Administration

Contact: Michael Dusenbery, Social Security Administration, 312-353-0567

A cooperative initiative between the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) was begun in April, 1995. Since that time, an SSA representative has been stationed at the INS office in downtown Chicago, interviewing the public and processing applications for social security numbers. Prior to this project, a new lawfully admitted applicant for permanent residence had to locate and travel to an SSA office for a personal interview. Frequently, the applicants would forget some part of the proof of immigration and residency status or have translation difficulty. This initiative reduces potential fraud connected with immigrant social security number applications. By having INS expert representatives available, SSA can validate documents presented as legitimate. In addition, the one-stop process has enabled the INS and SSA to provide better customer service to new immigrants. Immigrant entry into the country and the workforce is facilitated by providing almost immediate social security work authorization to applicants. This process also reduces the walk-in traffic to other SSA offices, allowing those offices to concentrate their efforts on other workloads, such as expediting payments to the aged and disabled.

Interagency Compliance Committee, Western Region

Awarded June, 1997

to the Immigration and Naturalization Service; Internal Revenue Service; Social Security Administration; Department of Labor; and Department of Employment Development and Division of Labor Standards Enforcement, State of California

Contact: Leslie Walker, Social Security Administration, 510-970-8430

The Interagency Compliance Committee (IACC) was created to cultivate cooperative efforts between agencies, for removing roadblocks to more efficient and equitable wage and tax reporting and collection, and to create a better customer service environment for employers and independent contractors. The IACC approached this initiative by educating the agencies about tax responsibilities and procedures, and in a way fair for everyone, ensuring employers and contractors were held accountable for reporting and for payments. These initiatives were all accomplished by teaming together federal and state resources to eliminate the duplication of activities, by sharing information within disclosure limitations, and by removing barriers between agencies to reach common goals and provide outstanding customer service.

To date the IACC has been extremely effective and has generated such results as collecting over \$1.1 million in unpaid taxes from the agricultural industry in one district in California, identifying \$9.3 million in delinquent tax payments within the garment industry, and improving customer satisfaction through one stop education seminars.

International Entry Subcommittee

Awarded May, 1996

to the Atlanta District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service; Federal Bureau of Investigation; U.S. Secret Service; U.S. Customs Service; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; Department of State; Department of Agriculture; Federal Aviation Administration; U.S. Public Health Service; City of Atlanta Police Department; Fulton County Sheriff's Department; Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games; and Airport Group International

Contact: Willie Anderson, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 404-763-7831

The International Entry Subcommittee was initiated and led by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Atlanta District Office. The International Entry Subcommittee focused on streamlining the entry of international visitors into the Atlanta, Georgia area for the 1996 International Summer Olympic Games. The Olympic Identity Card was specifically developed for this purpose and was issued to approximately 40,000 persons. It was distinctive, contained a number of stringent security features, and eliminated the need for Olympic family members (i.e., athletes, coaches, judges, official sponsors, and foreign media) to obtain visas for the duration of the event. An International Entry Command Center, served as the official welcoming facility. It addressed visitors' concerns related to the Olympics, and was staffed on a 24-hour basis with appropriate officials and linguists for the duration of the games. An International Entry Response Team was created to resolve any international entry issues.

The subcommittee successfully reengineered the arrival process to speed the entry of international travelers, strengthen law enforcement and safety procedures to ensure the highest levels of security, facilitate the arrival and entry of non-Olympic international travelers, and significantly reduce the need for overtime staffing. Recognizing the value of support and contributions from the larger Atlanta community, the subcommittee extended its efforts beyond the participating federal agencies. It conducted outreach programs and frequent tours of the Federal Inspections Facility at Hartsfield International Airport. Roles of all subcommittee agencies and member entities were delineated, coordinated, and shared.

Joint Automated Booking System

Awarded October, 1996

to the Justice Management Division, Department of Justice; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Bureau of Prisons; Drug Enforcement Administration; U.S. Marshals Service; and Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: R. D. Robertson, Justice Management Division, 202-307-7483

Offender processing procedures in our nation's federal law enforcement agencies have not changed significantly in over half a century. For each arrest, an offender moving through the federal criminal justice system is "booked" by each agency he or she encounters; that is, a single arrest results in numerous bookings. The current booking process is time consuming, and paper records are difficult to store, organize, retrieve, and share. The five Department of Justice law enforcement components (the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Prisons, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Marshals Service, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service) agreed to jointly undertake the complex task of redesigning and automating the manual booking process as a JPR reinvention laboratory. The result was a prototype joint automated booking system (JABS), in use in south Florida since February, 1996, that facilitates the electronic collection, storage, and sharing of offender information. The JABS prototype, used to book over 2,200 offenders arrested in south Florida as of October 1996, has been a test bed for further system development.

JABS has undergone an independent assessment of productivity gains and other benefits. The evaluation indicated that JABS successfully eliminated redundant booking procedures, reduced the time required to book an offender, improved interagency cooperation, and facilitated the sharing of offender information among DOJ law enforcement components. Of particular note, automated booking is completed in approximately one-quarter of the time required for the manual booking process. JABS results in a computer record available throughout the DOJ that contains photographic, fingerprint, and biographical data for each offender. With JABS, there are 61 common data elements, instead of 305 separate elements; 1 photograph, rather than 5; and 1 set of quality electronic fingerprints, instead of 15 sets of paper prints. Offender records remain unchanged except when updated by authorized personnel.

These accomplishments reflect each team member's professional and dedicated contribution of expertise and experience, and a shared vision of common value. A proven success, JABS is

being institutionalized within DOJ. The JABS project office is responsible for providing a nationwide JABS solution to federal law enforcement practitioners.

Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System

Awarded October, 1996

to the U.S. Marshals Service; Immigration and Naturalization Service; and Bureau of Prisons

Contact: Tom Little, U.S. Marshals Service, 405-680-3400

The Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System, JPATS, resulted from an innovative partnership between the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS), the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, with regular contributions from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. JPATS achieved its objectives of transporting criminals and illegal aliens more safely, efficiently, and effectively than was previously possible. Before JPATS, transfer of detained aliens, between institutions and for deportation, was managed by the INS. Transportation of other federal prisoners was the responsibility of the USMS.

As the prison population grew over the last decade, and as enforcement priorities changed nationwide, prisoner movements rose by more than 100 percent. Not only did the number of passengers increase dramatically, so did the geographical dispersion of destinations. With increased enforcement emphasis on aggravated felons, instead of just illegal border crossings, detained aliens needed to be transported from and to locations throughout the country, rather than locations only near the Southwest border. This dispersion, combined with the need to move prisoners quickly to make room in limited detention space, made it imperative that the collective resources of the Department of Justice be fully employed, regular schedules be established, and planes be filled to capacity. JPATS provided the necessary solution.

By combining equipment and personnel resources of the USMS and the INS, and by moving alien prisoners with other kinds of prisoners, flights were filled. This resulted in lower per-passenger costs, faster completion of prisoner movements, and more efficient use of valuable detention bed space. Moreover, cooperative prisoner transportation agreements were executed with military, state, and local law enforcement entities to carry prisoners under their jurisdictions on a space-available basis, reducing their costs while assuring maximum passenger loads. JPATS now handles 400 to 500 reservations each day of the year.

National Olympic Planning Group (Interagency)

Awarded March, 1997

to the Immigration and Naturalization Service; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Office of Justice Programs; Department of State; U.S. Customs Service; Department of Agriculture; Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games; and Transaction Systems Division, Inc.

Contact: Jack Achterberg, C/O American Embassy, Singapore, 65-476-9135

The National Olympic Planning Group was formed to ensure national security within the Olympic community and success of the 1996 Olympic Games. This multi-agency group completely reengineered the Olympic entry process. The National Olympic Planning Group designed the Olympic Identification Card (OIC), a highly secure, tamper-resistant document for Olympic family members. It streamlined the Olympic visa issuance process and provided resources for the Olympic games through a nationally coordinated effort. It also created, organized, and participated in the International Entry Response Team to provide an expedient resolution of any international entry issues.

The OIC and the reengineered application process offered many benefits for Olympic family members, the various National Organizing Committees, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, the Federal Inspection Services, and other federal, state and local agencies. The OIC identified the bearer as an Olympic family member, was used in lieu of a U.S. visa, and enabled

the bearer to obtain the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games accreditation, thereby gaining access to the Olympic Village during the Olympic games.

In the past, there had been no Olympic credential issued to Olympic family members which served as an identification document and in lieu of a visa. For the Atlanta Games, the National Olympic Planning Group, working closely with the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, began work in 1992 to develop an entirely new credential containing the latest security features. The resulting product made it impossible to counterfeit, reproduce photo-mechanically, or photo-substitute without detection. The new identity document was regarded as one of the most secure documents in the world by INS's Forensic Document Lab. The OIC had the added feature of being easily recognizable by the travel industry, the Federal Inspection Services, law enforcement authorities, the Department of State, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, and other agencies. It provided Olympic family members with easy access to various benefits and services.

Newark Airport International Arrivals Facility Team/Port Quality Improvement Council

Awarded February, 1997

to the Immigration and Naturalization Service; U.S. Customs Service; Department of Agriculture; Port Authorities of New York and New Jersey; Newark International Airport; International Arrivals Facility Team; and the Port Quality Improvement Council

Contact: John P. Leyden, U.S. Customs Service, 201-443-0200

Historically, the International Terminal at Newark International Airport posed delay challenges for immigration and customs officials. Now, due to the new 58 counter Immigration Hall and new procedures set in place by this reinvention team, 3,000 arriving passengers per hour can move through the inspection process with less chance of waiting in lines.

The Port Quality Improvement Council (PQIC), consisting of the Port Authorities of New York and New Jersey, the U.S. Customs Service (Customs), the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and the Department of Agriculture (USDA), includes both labor and management with employee buy in through a participative framework. Through effective teamwork, the PQIC instituted major changes that resulted in 85 percent of deplaning passengers completing the federal inspection process in less than 35 minutes.

The traditional inspection process was labor intensive, rooted in document review, passenger interview, and luggage examination and often was repeated at each agency checkpoint (INS, Customs and USDA). Also, there was limited data exchange (interviews and exams) among the agencies. The PQIC, however, established, in lieu of document review, an inter-agency electronic environment, the Advanced Passenger Inspection System (APIS). Working with the airlines, each agency has guaranteed expedited service when passenger lists are transmitted electronically prior to aircraft arrival. Agencies can then process data during flight time. Passengers believed to require further examination are identified prior to arrival; all others are deemed cleared. APIS reduces the keystrokes an INS inspector must enter to verify whether a passenger is cleared, resulting in a 50 percent reduction in processing time at the primary inspection point. This faster clearance is also more efficient for law enforcement and federal officers. Secondary inspectors can contact other agencies to electronically post one day look outs on passengers referred for a more thorough examination.

INS, Customs, and USDA also established a joint electronic Passenger Analysis Unit (PAU). PAU eliminates redundant analysis, minimizes duplicate look outs, and ensures accountability of information transfers. PAU also provides feedback to the airlines on the quality and accuracy of data. There is less time spent on data modification and corrections. PAU is also the core action point for Customs processing, enabling Customs to make reasonable assumptions for effective risk assessments. In addition, the USDA uses the PAU data bank to identify those flights deemed a high probability for carrying illegal merchandise. As a result, low-risk passengers require less intrusive examination, such as luggage x-rays or K-9 inspection.

With more efficient data processing systems now in place, the PQIC recognized the need for a building design that would facilitate passenger flow through the new, improved inspection process. Working with the Port Authority, a 58-counter Immigration Hall was designed and blue lanes set up for processing APIS passengers. Multilingual variable message signs segregate blue lane from non- blue lane passengers. More carousels allow for segregation of APIS flights and larger carousels accommodate the international traveler, who customarily carries more baggage. Ample floor area between the carousels allows for deployment of roving inspectors and provides adequate room for less intrusive luggage examination.

To ensure the continued success of this initiative, an educational effort is under way that involves meeting with various airline managers and other personnel and instructing airline flight attendants and ground personnel to direct passengers into the appropriate queues. In-flight videos and written pamphlets prepare passengers for this improved inspection process.

Northern Area Field Office of the Social Security Administration and Sacramento INS

Awarded June, 1997

to the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Social Security Administration

Contact: Martin Almanzan, Northern Area Office, Social Security Administration, 916-338-6900

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and Social Security Administration (SSA) joined together to improve public service and streamline internal processes when both were faced with a serious increase in workload due to the welfare reform legislation passed by Congress in August 1996.

Through reinvention, they succeeded in maintaining their ability to provide excellent and timely levels of public service by streamlining four internal processes: welfare reform notification; social security number applications; problem solving; and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) citizenship notification.

To explain welfare reform, INS and SSA created videotapes, and developed and held seminars in several languages for welfare recipients. The seminars have included participation from community leaders, county welfare officials, and congressional and state assembly staff. Recipients' questions are addressed in a relaxed, convenient forum, eliminating many of the recipients' fears and uncertainty. This forum also enables elected officials to hear the concerns of their constituents. The videotapes, in eight languages, are used by SSA, INS, and advocacy groups who provide services to the recipients.

The team has also provided seminars for other governmental bodies to assist them in understanding the new provisions. INS trains SSA employees on citizenship requirements so SSA can provide proper instructions to recipients.

To streamline the issuance of social security cards, new citizens now receive an application with their information packet at their swearing-in ceremony. An SSA representative assists with completion and certification of documents at that time, and a new card is issued through the mail. During the first six weeks this new process was in place, over 1,000 new cards were issued.

The team has also streamlined the process for confirming citizenship for SSI, Medicaid, and state and county assistance recipients. The changes ensure accuracy of SSA's records.

Most notably, the team has reinvented the lengthy interagency problem-solving process. In the past, when there was a problem or question, SSA would complete an INS form and mail it to San Francisco for resolution. With the new association, problems are now handled informally by telephone. This saves staff time and is more responsive to the public's needs.

The INS and SSA's cooperative venture has served as a model for government organizations coping with increasingly complicated programs in a period of reduced staff, and will undoubtedly save taxpayers money and stress.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) - INS Partnership

Awarded October, 1998

to the Central Region, Immigration and Naturalization Service; and Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Contact: Jeronimo Gomez, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 214-767-4736 x235
Barbara Blessing, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 214-905-5201

The partnership of these two agencies came about after Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) inspections of the Central Region of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) resulted in a high number of health and safety citations in various Border Patrol stations and INS offices. Before the partnership, OSHA and INS Management did not interact to discuss ideas or pro-active measures to correct outstanding citations and overcome future deficiencies.

Since OSHA was getting few effective results from INS on reducing the violations, the Dallas Regional OSHA office initiated contact with the Central Regional Operations Office of INS to confront the problem via a partnership approach. OSHA focused on using a more pro-active program of compliance assistance to help INS develop model safety and health programs at some of its more hazardous locations. These programs could later be duplicated at other INS locations nationwide.

After agreeing to work in partnership, the team identified a variety of focus areas, including additional training by OSHA for the INS, local Health and Safety Specialists, and Collateral-Duty Health & Safety Officers; OSHA technical assistance visits to key INS work sites to help set up

safety programs; and quarterly partnership meetings to discuss progress and steps that could be initiated by INS.

The partnership resulted in INS successfully reducing 82 percent of its safety and health citations. INS has also spent \$1 million towards the upgrading of its fire protection systems throughout various border patrol stations and traffic checkpoints. Funding has also been provided for the repair, alteration, and replacement of facilities identified as having health and safety deficiencies.

Since implementation of the partnership, INS has cut the response time for correcting its safety and health hazards from one year to 30 days. Additionally, the pro-active partnership approach has led to the early detection and correction of deficiencies in other INS offices. This increase in abatement not only has reduced worker exposure to serious safety and health hazards, but also saves OSHA and INS administrative time and money by not having to verify employer actions in the abatement of hazards after a citation has been issued.

Both agencies have been successful in reducing the number of exposures to safety and health hazards for all INS offices, thereby ensuring the employees' right to a safe work environment.

Operation Enhanced Clearance

Awarded May, 1996

to the Immigration and Naturalization Service; U.S. Customs Service; Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture; Los Angeles Department of Airports; and Foreign Airline Operators Committee

Contact: Anthony Owens, U.S. Customs Service, 310-215-2326

Summer peak travel, the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and an outdated international terminal posed special challenges to the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). In preparation for the large number of international passengers arriving at LAX, federal inspections personnel from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the U.S. Customs Service (Customs), and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), partnered with the Los Angeles Department of Airports and the Foreign Airline Operators Committee to create a better way to process incoming visitors. To ensure delivery of courteous and efficient service, the partnership reinvented the inspections process through Operation Enhanced Clearance. Together the three agencies identified flights eligible for participation in the operation. Passengers from the selected flights were taken to a separate area and processed through special INS express lanes. Customs and APHIS operations were conducted at a baggage claim carousel outside of the main arrival hall. Customs Passenger Service Representatives were also present to ensure that arriving passengers received the best possible service.

Operation Enhanced Clearance's results demonstrated its success. As many as 25 percent of all arriving passengers were processed during peak hours. The team cut red tape for the government, airlines, and passengers. It was proactive in solving congestion and unsafe crowding in the main terminal, thus enabling enforcement officers to concentrate on higher-risk flights.

Operation Jobs

Awarded September, 1994
to the Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Neil Jacobs, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 214-655-3093

The goal of Operation Jobs, now expanded to all 18 states in the central region of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), is to remove illegal aliens from jobs and replace them with qualified unemployed persons, including homeless persons and newly arrived legal refugees, referred by publicly-funded agencies. Operation Jobs is based on two proven assumptions: the majority of illegal alien workers possess fraudulent documents that enable them to circumvent immigration laws to obtain employment within the United States; and as soon as illegal alien workers are removed by INS from their places of employment, other illegal alien workers fill the vacant positions. Operation Jobs was initiated to interrupt and eliminate this cycle. This is accomplished by the INS identifying a business or industry thought to employ unauthorized workers. The INS then sends a notice of inspection to the business, and follows up with a review of records by INS special agents. If illegal alien workers are identified, the INS meets with the employer to determine his or her willingness to participate in Operation Jobs.

At the meeting, using inspection results, the employer is given a notice which lists aliens unauthorized to work in the United States. If the employer participates in the program, he or she is given sources of authorized workers to replace those identified as illegal. The employer is then given a specific period of time to recruit authorized workers. At the end of that period, INS special agents conduct an on-site inspection to arrest and remove any unauthorized aliens. Prior coordination by the INS with state and local agencies, such as county departments of human services, police departments, social service agencies, refugee settlement organizations, and state employment services, is vital to Operation Job s success.

By actively assisting businesses to fill their vacancies, Operation Jobs significantly reduces problems for those that lose the services of unauthorized workers. In a real sense, the program has been and remains a successful and mutually beneficial partnership among federal, state and local agencies and private businesses. Community and business leaders remain enthusiastic about the program. Since the program s inception, not a single complaint of bureaucratic insensitivity has been received. With thousands of jobs created and filled, small and large businesses, and public agencies have been unanimously positive, often publicly, about the program. Numerous media editorials have enthusiastically endorsed and championed the program s expansion. Operation Jobs provides cost-effective service to the public, to authorized workers, and to participating employers.

Port of Brownsville, Texas, Port Authority Quality Improvement

Awarded July, 1998
to the Immigration and Naturalization Service; U.S. Customs Service; and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture

Contact: Jorge Flores, U.S. Customs Service, 210-548-2540

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), U.S. Customs Service (Customs), and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Department of Agriculture, worked with

the Brownsville business community to reengineer the inspection process at this border community. With more than 50 percent of the community's economy dependent upon cross-border traffic, the ability to process traffic in a timely manner was critical.

Teamwork between INS, Customs, and APHIS resulted in improvements that streamlined the inspection process without hindering each agency's ability to carry out its mission.

The reengineered processes are cross-training on each other's mission; the development and distribution of a traveler brochure in English and Spanish, outlining steps the traveler can take to speed the inspection process; and the institution of an AM Radio Loop within a two mile radius of the Port that provides travelers information on entry information. To further reduce the average waiting time for travelers, the three agencies have joined in mandatory trunk inspections, quicker and less intrusive x-ray inspection of pedestrian baggage, and the establishment of a new portable message system to improve traffic flow.

The new programs have improved efficiency, compliance, and customer satisfaction and have been replicated at other border locations.

Refugee Center

Awarded September, 1996
to the Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Gil Jacobs, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 202-305-2751

Before the Refugee Center Initiative, refugee arrivals were processed at Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) district offices and the Washington Processing Center (WPC). Through time, it became obvious that a great deal of data entry was redundant, that some data was inaccurate, that there were unnecessarily high costs associated with processing refugee arrivals, that refugees were not receiving an acceptable level of service and, finally, that the business process had to and could be improved. The Refugee Center team was created to reinvent the process. Over two years in development and testing, the result is a successfully revamped, centralized and expanded refugee processing system which dramatically enhances the quality, accuracy and timeliness of service to both internal and external customers.

All refugee arrival records are processed at the WPC. The data exchange between the INS and the Department of State has been expanded. Single-point data entry now cascades into and among several databases. Unnecessary steps and costs have been eliminated. The many specific, positive results of this project include:

- expedited receipts by refugees of allowable benefits, since some INS databases will now contain the necessary information within 72 hours of arrival;

- detection of fraudulent benefit claims at all levels of government, and identification of individuals attempting to receive benefits illegally;

- immediate and accurate information on refugees applying for employment to participants in the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE);
- reduced workload in processing refugee arrival data for INS employees at district offices

and ports-of-entry, thereby permitting resources to be better employed; and

increased integrity of INS databases by timely and accurate data sharing with the Department of State.

The streamlined process has proven itself and continues to be of real value to federal agencies, private concerns, the refugees, and the American public.

Reno Field Office Wage and Hour Immigration Program (WHIP)

Awarded May, 1997

to the Reno, Nevada Field Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service; Employment Standards Administration, Department of Labor; and Employment Services Administration, State of Nevada

Contact: Tom Gondek, Department of Labor, 702-784-5200

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Employment Standards Administration (ESA), Department of Labor, officials in Reno, joined with State of Nevada Employment Services Administration staff to develop and implement the partnership known as WHIP. The partnership pools resources for identifying illegal aliens and ensuring undocumented workers receive at least minimum wage for all hours worked. It also identifies opportunities for employment for legal aliens and U.S. citizens.

Previously, ESA officials had difficulty collecting unpaid last wages for apprehended undocumented workers. Now, when INS officials visit an establishment and apprehend workers, the officials fill out and leave with employers a notice that explains wage laws. The INS officials then instruct employers on their requirements under the wage laws and advise them that representatives from ESA will be contacting them. INS also provides apprehended workers with a questionnaire and release form, then contacts ESA with all pertinent information. Armed with this information, ESA is able to follow up to collect unpaid wages and provide assistance in filling vacated positions with documented workers.

From implementation of the program until April 1997, this approach has been used for 99 businesses, and more than \$380,000 has been collected for 1,811 undocumented workers. This amounts to an average expenditure of 2.93 hours per case, almost a 50 percent reduction in the amount of time previously required to conduct these compliance actions. Additionally, the Nevada State Employment Service Agency was requested to provide 427 employees for positions which became available as a result of INS apprehensions.

Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection (SENTRI)

Awarded October, 1996

to the Immigration and Naturalization Service; U.S. Customs Service; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Drug Enforcement Administration; and United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California

Contact: Thomas Campbell, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 202-305-9246

George St. Clair, U.S. Customs Service, 202-927-1312

The Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) team, a JPR re-invention laboratory, addressed the needs to facilitate inspection of increasing cross-border traffic volume and reduce waiting time at land ports-of-entry; ensure continuing strict border integrity and security; and employ technology to the fullest practicable extent. Essentially, the team reinvented a two-century old border inspection process which did not consider different levels of trustworthiness among travelers. The team designed the SENTRI system for use by low-risk, pre-screened international travelers who frequently cross the border. The system identifies low-risk travelers, verifies their low-risk status, and screens approved participants and their vehicles each time they enter the United States.

To take advantage of SENTRI, prospective participants must submit to exhaustive background clearances, have their photographs and other personal information entered into a database, and pay an application fee. Once provisionally approved, their vehicles receive a 7-point U.S. Customs Service (Customs) inspection, and the applicants themselves are thoroughly interviewed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and Customs. Approved participants use a special vehicular lane, lined by bollards and iron posts, which isolates and controls SENTRI traffic. Vehicle control is achieved by use of electric gauges, tire shredders, and a pneumatic, pop-up bollard. Technology, including in-ground inductive loops and free standing light curtains, sense vehicles, enabling verification in the SENTRI automatic vehicle identification system, and permits inspectors to readily validate and verify travelers' identities. The SENTRI team used standard PC-based software architecture and off-the-shelf hardware to build the system. Travelers at Otay Mesa, California, the first SENTRI site, find the system revolutionary. Before SENTRI, waiting time at the port-of-entry averaged 25 minutes; waiting time in the new SENTRI lane now averages 1 minute. Siphoning off low-risk travelers has significantly cut the waiting time in non-SENTRI lanes to less than 12 minutes.

The SENTRI team, with numerous federal agencies, the State of California, and the various local governments in Mexico, conceived, designed, built and opened the SENTRI lane for testing only eight months after the team's first meeting, weeks in advance of its projected opening date. With no preconceptions about how to enhance and speed border inspections, the team developed the world's first automated, secure inspection system, an accomplishment neither INS nor Customs had been able to achieve alone.

Team EASI

Awarded September, 1994
to the Vermont Service Center, Eastern Region, Immigration and Naturalization Service

Contact: Paul Novak, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 802-527-3111

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Vermont Service Center, Eastern Region is a production and information processing and dissemination facility. Annually, the center adjudicates over 65,000 requests for immigration benefits, processes over 2 million pieces of mail, provides responses to 800,000 telephone callers, and prepares over 100,000 written responses to information requests. Additionally, the Center performs computer-assisted link analysis to detect and deter complex fraud conspiracies. Disillusionment with the traditional hierarchical management system dictated necessary change. Team EASI (Eastern s

Accentuated Service Initiative) was formed to transform how the Center is run, and how it views its employees and their contributions.

Using the principles of Total Quality Management and leadership, with training provided to all employees, and with demonstrated management commitment, the results have been employee ownership ; innovation and risk-taking; enhanced emphasis on customer satisfaction and quality work; and greater employee self esteem. The center's vision statement is the Vermont Service Center, through teamwork, continuous process improvements, and personnel development, will produce a product that is timely and of high quality which will promote customer satisfaction and employee self esteem.

To illustrate the center-wide application of this vision, the following areas or functions are among those that have been enhanced or reinvented: the performance evaluation system, the Center's internal communication network, increased span of supervision, capacity planning, work process improvement, quality of work-life, policy elimination, and labor-management partnerships. Team EASI's approach permits and encourages employees, formed into teams, to consider the entire Center environment and mission for improvement opportunities. As a measure of both involvement and success, fully 98 percent of team members' recommendations have been adopted. With Team EASI, costs have been reduced, production has been increased, product quality has been enhanced, and employee satisfaction has risen. The team's approach is future-focused, providing for continuous assessment, effort, and improvement.

III Corps and Fort Hood Army Community Service Naturalization Team

Awarded June, 1999

to the San Antonio, Texas District Office, Immigration and Naturalization Service; and Department of the Army

Contact: Kenneth Pasquarell, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 210-967-7073

The III Corps and Fort Hood Army Community Service (ACS) have established an installation Naturalization/Citizenship program. The ACS Naturalization Program provides non-U.S. citizen soldiers and their family members with information and assistance on naturalization procedures. Soldiers must obtain U.S. citizenship to remain in the U.S. Army for more than 8 years. As of August 1998, over 700 non-citizen soldiers were assigned to Fort Hood. The ACS Naturalization Program provides information and assistance to active duty soldiers, Department of Defense civilians, and their family members.

Applying for citizenship is a time-consuming process usually requiring a 15-16 month waiting period. Recognizing the challenges that soldiers face encompassing mission readiness (i.e. rapid deployments, professional development requirements, and Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves), a partnership was established with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), San Antonio District Office, San Antonio, Texas.

The INS realized the importance of this program and the positive impact it would have on soldiers and their family members' quality of life. Through the cooperation of the INS San Antonio District Director, the ACS Naturalization Program has been granted a special mailing procedure for non-U.S. citizen soldiers and their family members. ACS can mail naturalization applications directly to the INS San Antonio District Office in San Antonio. The program reduces the current 15-16 month processing time to 4-6 months,

resulting in a tremendous time-saving effort of 10-11 months. This partnership with INS allows the ACS Naturalization Program to prioritize time-sensitive cases (i.e., re-enlistment requirements, PCS moves).

Fort Hood is now the host for periodic community-wide naturalization ceremonies for soldiers, their family members, and residents of the local community. These were previously held in the Waco District Office which is 60 miles from Fort Hood.

This entire program reduces the excessive amount of time and money that soldiers previously spent on travel (150 miles one way) and long distance phone calls to San Antonio. This collaborative effort tremendously improves communication and significantly reduces the bureaucratic process for naturalization/citizenship. The Naturalization/Citizenship Program exemplifies the Team of Teams spirit at Fort Hood.